



U.S. Department of Justice

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Deputy Director of USAID Pleads Guilty to Federal Charges In Contract-Steering Scheme Defendant Admits Providing Sensitive Documents to Friend Whom She Selected for Health Care Project**

WASHINGTON – BethAnne Moskov, a deputy director for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), pled guilty today to charges stemming from a contract-steering scheme, announced U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips and Jonathan Schofield, Special Agent in Charge for the USAID Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations

Moskov, 53, of Silver Spring, Md., pled guilty in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to charges of conspiracy to defraud the United States and making false statements to law enforcement. The plea agreement, which is subject to Court approval, requires the Court to impose a sentence within the range of no prison time to a year and a day in prison. The Honorable Christopher R. Cooper scheduled sentencing for August 28, 2017.

“By engaging in cronyism and contract-steering, this defendant chose to reward a friend with federal money instead of actively seeking the most qualified and cost-effective bidder,” said U.S. Attorney Phillips. “The prosecution of this case underscores our determination to protect taxpayer dollars and demand that contracting officials act fairly and within the law.”

“The American taxpayer expects federal employees to execute their duties and obligations conscientiously and in a dispassionate, fair manner that puts public good ahead of private gain,” said Special Agent in Charge Schofield. “Here we see an unfortunate exception; an official who used her position to benefit herself. Though the damage in reputational harm and erosion of public trust is difficult to quantify, the resolute investigation and prosecution of Ms. Moskov is a reminder that legal and ethical standards for federal employees are not haphazard and consequences for such transgressions can be grave.”

According to the plea documents, Moskov worked from July 2012 through August 2016 as the USAID Deputy Director for the Office of Health, Infectious Disease, and Nutrition. Her office was located at USAID headquarters in Washington, D.C. The charges involve her dealings with a person identified in the documents as “Co-Conspirator A,” a close personal friend who worked as a consultant for various projects for USAID, as well as the private sector. Moskov and “Co-Conspirator A” took trips together and was the man of honor at her wedding.

In June 2014, according to the plea documents, Moskov wanted to hire “Co-Conspirator A” for a consultancy contract. She was the approving and selecting official for the contract, and the person to be chosen for the work was to report to her. Moskov provided internal government document templates needed for the consultancy to “Co-Conspirator A.” In an e-mail at the time, Moskov told him that “we need to jump thru a few hoops and will go through the motions but you will selected in the job – any time you spend putting this together add it as days to your consultancy...thanks peaches.”

In July 2014, “Co-Conspirator A” prepared a Selection Memo and other consultancy documents from the templates for Moskov. The Selection Memo listed “Co-Conspirator A” as the highest ranked candidate. Later that month, Moskov selected him as the “best consultant to fill the project order.” The Selection Memo included language taken verbatim from the version provided by “Co-Conspirator A.” “Co-Conspirator A” was paid a total of \$22,480.85 for the consulting project, according to the plea documents.

Additionally, during an investigation, law enforcement learned that Moskov had used her government e-mail account in 2012 to ask “Co-Conspirator A” for a loan to help her in financing a house. “Co-Conspirator A” agreed to loan her the funds. In an e-mail, Moskov thanked “Co-Conspirator A” for the loan and wrote, ““Send me your CV again and let me float it here with the 2 missions as well as some of my contacts around town ...there is SOOO much work going on here! I got to get you in the system.” “Co-Conspirator A” wired her \$7,100.

In December 2015, Special Agents with the USAID Office of Inspector General interviewed Moskov at USAID headquarters. She falsely stated that she had repaid the entire \$7,100 loan from “Co-Conspirator A.” In reality, she had paid nothing back.

In announcing the plea, U.S. Attorney Phillips and Special Agent in Charge Schofield commended the Special Agents who investigated the case from the U.S. Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General. They also acknowledged the efforts of those who handled the case at the U.S. Attorney’s Office, including Paralegal Specialists Kristy Penny and Joshua Fein. Finally, they expressed appreciation for the work of Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony Saler, who is prosecuting the case.